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OLD LOVE SONGS

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OLD LOVE SONGS.

A LOVE SONG.

Old Love Songs.

A COLLECTION OF

Poems, Sonnets, and Ballads

Josiah

Illustrated.

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HOW VIOLETS CAME BLUE . *Robert Herrick, 1591-1674*

ON A GIRDLE.

THAT which her slender waist confined
Shall now my joyful temples bind;
No monarch but would give his crown
His arms might do what this has done.

It was my heaven's extremest sphere,
The pale which held that lovely dear;
My joy, my grief, my hope, my love
Did all within this circle move.

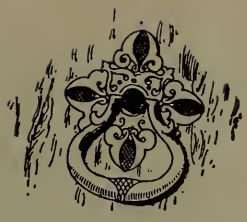
A narrow compass, and yet there
Dwelt all that's good and all that's fair;
Give me but what this riband bound,
Take all the rest the sun goes round.

SONG.

UNCLOSE those eyelids, and outshine
The brightness of the breaking day!
The light they cover is divine,
Why should it fade so soon away?
Stars vanish so, and day appears,
The sun's so drowned in the morning's tears.

O, let not sadness cloud that beauty,
Which if you lose you'll ne'er recover;
It is not love's, but sorrow's duty,
To die so soon for a dead lover.
Banish! O banish grief! and then
Our joys will bring our hopes again.

Henry Glapthorne.



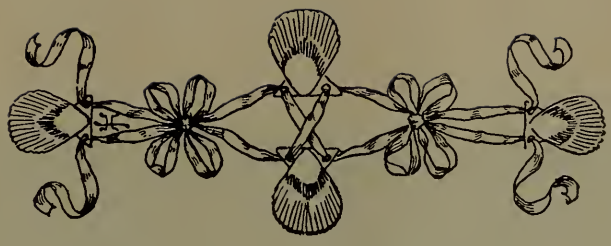
PLEASE RING THE BELL.

I'LL tell you a story that's not in Tom Moore :
Young love likes to knock at a pretty girl's door :
So he called upon Lucy—''twas just ten o'clock—
Like a spruce single man, with a smart double knock.

Now a hand-maid, whatever her fingers be at,
Will run like a puss when she hears a rat-tat :
So Lucy ran up—and in two seconds more
Had question'd the stranger and answer'd the door.

The meeting was bliss; but the parting was woe;
For the moment will come when such comers must go.
So she kissed him and whisper'd—poor innocent thing—
"The next time you come, love, pray come with a ring."

Thomas Hood, 1798–1845.



THE MERMAIDEN.

HE was a Prince with golden hair
In a palace beside the sea,
And I but a poor Mermaiden—
And how should he care for me?

Last summer I came, in the long blue nights
To sit in the cool sea-caves,
Last summer he came to count the stars
From his terrace beside the waves,

There's nothing so fair in the sea down there
As the light on his golden tresses,
There's nothing so sweet as his voice, ah nothing
So warm as the warmth of his kisses.

I could not help but love him—love him
Till my love grew pain to me.
And tomorrow he weds the Princess
In that palace beside the sea.

Owen Meredith.

HOW ROSES CAME RED.

SHALL I tell you how the rose at first grew red
And whence the lily whiteness borrowèd?
You blush'd, and straight the rose was dight,
The lily kissed your hand, and so was white.
Before such time, each rose had but a stain,
And lilies nought but paleness did contain:
You have the native colour, these the dye,
And only flourish in your livery.

"Wits' Recreations," 1640.

KITTY OF COLERAINE.

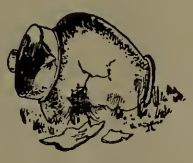
AS beautiful Kitty one morning was tripping,
With a pitcher of milk from the fair of Coleraine,
When she saw me she stumbled, the pitcher it tumbled,
And all the sweet butter-milk water'd the plain.

"O, what shall I do now, t'was looking at you now,
Sure, sure, such a pitcher I'll ne'er meet again,
'Twas the pride of my dairy, O, Barney M'Leary,
You're sent as a plague to the girls of Coleraine."

I sat down beside her,—and gently did chide her,
That such a misfortune should give her such pain,
A kiss then I gave her,—before I did leave her,
She vow'd for such pleasure she'd break it again.

'Twas hay-making season, I can't tell the reason,
Misfortunes will never come single,—that's plain,
For, very soon after poor Kitty's disaster,
The devil a pitcher was whole in Coleraine.

Unknown.



TO CELIA.

DRINK to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll look not for the wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine,
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.
I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honoring thee,
As giving it a hope, that there
It could not withered be,
But thou thereon did'st only breathe,
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when, it grows and swells, I ween,
Not of itself, but thee.

Ben Jonson.

E. HART
1893

TO SYLVIA.

From "Two Gentlemen of Verona."

WHO is Sylvia? What is she,
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heavens such grace did lend her,
That she admired might be.

Is she kind as she is fair,–
For beauty lives with kindness?–
Love doth to her eyes repair
To help him of his blindness;
And being helped, inhabits there.

Then to Sylvia let us sing,
That Sylvia is excelling:
She excels each mortal thing,
Upon the dull earth dwelling;
To her let us garlands bring.

Shakespeare.

TO MY MISTRESS' EYES.

From "Women Pleased."

O FAIR sweet face, O, eyes celestial bright,
Twin stars in heaven, that now adorn the night!
O fruitful lips, where cherries ever grow,
And damask cheeks, where all sweet beauties blow!
O thou from head to foot divinely fair!
Cupid's most cunning net's made of that hair,
And, as he weaves himself for curious eyes,
"O me, O me, I'm caught myself!" he cries:
Sweet rest about thee, sweet and golden sleep,
Soft peaceful thoughts, your hourly watches keep,
Whilst I in wonder sing this sacrifice
To beauty sacred, and those angel eyes.

Beaumont and Fletcher.

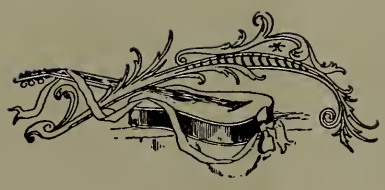
SONG.

O DO not wanton with those eyes,
Lest I be sick with seeing;
Nor cast them down, but let them rise,
Lest shame destroy their being.

O be not angry with those fires,
For then their threats will kill me,
Nor look too kind on my desires,
For then my hopes will spill me.

O do not steep them in thy tears,
For so will sorrow slay me,
Nor spread them as distract with fears,
Mine own enough betray me.

Ben Jonson.



SERENADE.

From "The Spanish Curate."

DEAREST, do not you delay me,
Since thou know'st I must be gone;
Wind and tide, 'tis thought, doth stay me,
But 'tis wind that must be blown
From that breath, whose native smell
Indian odors doth excel.

O, then speak, thou fairest fair,
Kill not him who vows to serve thee;
But perfume this neighboring air,
Else dull silence sure will starve me;
'Tis a word that's quickly spoken
Which, being restrained, a heart is broken.

Beaumont and Fletcher.

HOW VIOLETS CAME BLUE.

LOVE on a day, wise poets tell,
Some time in wrangling spent,
Whether the Violets should excel,
Or she, in sweetest scent.

But Venus having lost the day,
Poor girls! she fell on you;
And beat ye so as some dare say,
Her blows did make ye blue.

Robert Herrick, 1591–1674.

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